

ARKANSAS COUNTY

Arkansas County was created by the legislature of the territory of Missouri in 1813 and has dual county seats, with courthouses in Dewitt and Stuttgart. The oldest records in Arkansas are kept in the Stuttgart Courthouse. These records, written in Spanish, date from 1796. The courtroom has a unique design in which the witness sits in front of the judge and faces the jury, unlike most courtrooms in which the witness sits beside the judge and faces the spectators. The landscape of the county is rich, flat, delta farmland. There are two museums in the county, Stuttgart Agricultural Museum and the Arkansas Post Museum and National Memorial located in Gillett. The population of Arkansas County is 21,653 (1990 census), with 64.5% being rural. In 1992, there were 490 farms totaling more than 411,000 acres. There are 8,289 households within the county, and as of May 1, 1995, there were 9,922 registered voters.

ASHLEY COUNTY

996.705
County history

Ashley County, the fifth largest county in the state, was formed on November 30, 1848, from part of Drew County, with final boundary adjustments made in 1861. The landscape of the county is coastal plain, level to rolling pine-forested hills, and flat cropland. Hamburg is the county seat. Two-thirds of Ashley County is hill land, most covered in pine timber and other forest products. Lumbermen bought the first blocks of forest land in 1898. The original sawmill was in operation until 1901. Ashley County has an innovative recycling program that has taken sixty-five per cent of the waste stream out of its landfill. The county owns equipment to press paper and yard waste into small cubes, which are then sold to Georgia-Pacific for use as fuel. Today Georgia-Pacific owns forty-five per cent of the land in the county.

BAXTER COUNTY

Baxter County, formed on March 24, 1873, from parts of Fulton, Izard, Marion, and Searcy counties, was named for Elisha Baxter, then Governor of Arkansas. Mountain Home is the county seat. The landscape of Baxter County is rugged and mountainous. The county courthouse sits between two of the state's largest lakes, Bull Shoals and Norfolk. A third floor was added to the courthouse at Mountain Home between 1908 and 1912. In the early 1900's, another thriving town in Baxter County was vying for the county seat, and the Arkansas Legislature passed an act requiring the courthouse to have three stories. A third floor, therefore, was added hurriedly to the Mountain Home structure. The courthouse is located fourteen miles from the oldest courthouse in Arkansas in the town of Norfolk, the log house of Major Wolfe, built in 1809. Over the past three decades, the population of Baxter County has boomed. Tourists and retirees account for much of the county's growth and more than half its tax dollars. Visitors often return to take up residence. The county is home to a technical campus of